

with the materials for their science is because we have become separated from our own history, have to recapture it consciously and have even to search desperately in South Sea islands in order to discover the roots of our own being. The men of the thirteenth century had not suffered that break and needed no anthropologist to tell them where to find their roots because they had never lost them; it is this which justifies our reading between the lines of the Summa. There is, indeed, a thirst for history in any philosophy which starts from being, for being is an act implying both will and time; the struggle of wills in the setting of time together make up the stuff of history and they are factors which St Thomas does not ignore in the interests of a misplaced rationalism. A rationalism which seeks only to tie up essences into neat bundles, to exclude contingency and free-will and to deny the jagged nature of all temporal experiences was as far from the mind of St Thomas as it was from the minds of Dr Temple and Mr Lewis. Indeed, one may legitimately doubt whether either of these gentlemen would go so far as St Thomas in recognising the unresolved element in all political situations as when he says 'the overthrow of this (i.e. tyrannical) regime has not the nature of sedition', and obviously leaves the question of the precise conditions justifying rebellion to the enlightened common-sense of the people. The narrow rationalists of every age regard this as a poor ending to a political treatise because they think that they are without guides and that 'anything might happen'; it was because he realised that 'anything might happen' in such a practical activity as politics that St Thomas did not try to fit politics into the stifling straight-jacket provided by some of his followers.

DONALD NICHOLL

OBITER

CATHOLICS NOW HAVE THEIR 'HORIZON'. Or so a reviewer of the new *Month* assures us. Certainly the 'New Series, Vol. 1' would not be likely to reject *The Wreck of the Deutschland*. A strong team of contributors from Fr Martin D'Arcy to Evelyn Waugh applies itself to a non-stop cultural performance, as uptodate as any and most handsomely appointed. It may be fairly described as the Campion Hall of journalism, where Old Masters must meet the competition of the *avant garde*. The February instalment includes a new short story by Graham Greene, *The Hint of an Explanation*, which is a most odd amalgam of professional finesse and a theme from Montague Summers. Sacrilege is not a gracious subject, and this minutely, even cruelly, observant account of its impact on a child must raise a doubt in the minds of those who, however reluctantly,

accepted integrity of intention in *The Heart of the Matter*. Where, one may ask, is Mr Greene's obsessional interest in the hidden slums of Faith leading him? He can claim a novelist's autonomy. There is no gainsaying his skill. Is he finally going to find a way out of this lonely, limited scrutiny of neurosis and loss? *The Month* 'aims at providing for those interests which go to make a complete aim': not, one hopes, to be fulfilled alone through the compelling demands of fashion and an established name.

* * * *

ECONOMIE ET HUMANISME continues its admirable work to which there is scarcely anything comparable in English-speaking countries—of providing a human, perhaps one should say humane, interpretation of the arid wastes of economics and sociology, too often considered as divorced from the human needs they exist to serve. The French Dominican group responsible for *Economie et Humanisme* makes full use of modern techniques—there is nothing amateur about its analyses and statistical abstracts. But it is a relief and a corrective to find, as in the latest number, a skilled diagnosis of economic calamity prefaced with some hard thinking about Conscience. Père Desroches, in his 'Dialectic of Nature and Conscience' has provided a salutary text for the planners.

* * * *

FRANKFURTER HEFTE (January) discusses 'The Pact with Satan', or, in other words, the ruinous argument that 'it is better to have a war now when we are strong rather than later when our chances will be less'. Walter Dirks emphasises that such reasoning is a reasoning without God, in whose hands alone the future of the world must lie. Reviewing recent literature on Goethe, Franz Gotting quotes the words of Jaspers, when in 1947 he received the Goethe Prize for Literature at Frankfurt: 'The day of Goethe's cult is over'.

* * * *

ORBIS CATHOLICUS (Vienna) gives an account of a conference on the Christian Apostolate held last December in Vienna. Dr Fritz Heer underlined the threat to modern man which comes from his living in a closed world, a monad with no windows for God or one's neighbour. No communication means no apostolate, only enmity, division, religious strife. The critical question for contemporary Christianity is just this: whether it will set up for itself a closed world, which will ultimately mean another Crusade, or whether it will seek to build an open world, in which love of one's enemies will be the means of communication between man and man and the most actual form of loving one's neighbour.

THE LYSENKO AFFAIR is discussed by Père Dubarle, himself a physicist and professor at the Institut Catholique of Paris, in *La Vie Intellectuelle* (February). The remainder of the number is taken up with the general question of intellectual liberty, and in particular with the place of 'free discussion' within the framework of the Church. Professor Leclercq of Louvain has an important study of 'The Christian State and the Freedom of the Church', which concludes:

When one considers the way in which the Holy See is at present taking under its protection people of all beliefs in demanding freedom on their behalf, one gets the impression that its practical attitude springs from a high estimation of man's sovereign right to live in conformity with his faith, and that the Church would never bless a Catholic country that applied to the service of Catholic faith politics parallel to those employed by the Soviet in the interests of their ideas.

* * * *

GOD'S UNDERGROUND, the amazing story of a priest's visit to Russia disguised as a partisan officer in 1945, is printed in *The Catholic Digest* for February. The story is vouched for by Mgr Fulton Sheen, who knows the author (whose real name is not disclosed). Here are details of an active Christian Underground in Russia; details, too, of the Communist State's treatment of its prisoners, for the priest was arrested on his return to Czecho-Slovakia. Perhaps the most amazing incident recorded is that of the instruction and baptism of seven members of the MVD, achieved over weeks at dead of night in the central barracks of the secret police in Moscow.

* * * *

Focus becomes more valuable with each number. Its excellent reviews of current films, its general articles and its function as the organ of the Catholic Film apostolate in this country entitle it to the widest support.

THE WORD (Hadzor, Droitwich; 9s. 0d. per annum) is returning to monthly publication. It reflects the wide interests and practical genius of the Fathers of the Divine Word, whose work it exists to forward.

THE CATHOLIC WORLD (February) has a discerning article on the Christian importance of C. S. Lewis.

THE PYLON, the quarterly of the Holy Child nuns published in Rome (10 Via Boncompagni), is a model of missionary magazines. The latest number has a well-informed article by Anne Freemantle on Father de Foucauld's Fraternities as well as a further instalment of Father Martindale's sketches of the history of the Magi's gold.

ALDATE